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Published to advance the Science of cold-blooded vertebrates

AN ADIRONDACK PERCH-PIKE PROBLEM.

For the last four years I have spent the month of August in the Adirondack Mountains, on the shore of Stony Creek ponds, sometimes called Spectacle lakes. These are three small ponds connected by Stony Creek allowing fish to pass freely from one pond to another. These ponds are in Coreys, Franklin County, New York. Their water comes from Ampersand Brook, a famous trout stream. Stony Creek, the outlet, runs into the Raquette River which finds its way into the St. Lawrence at Cornwall.

During each of these visits I have fished these ponds practically every day, and previous to this year have found pike (*Esox lucius*) few and far between, and perch (*Perca flavescens*) abundant. This summer I had great difficulty in catching a perch for bait, sometimes fishing an hour before one was secured. Pike on the contrary were abundant. My string for the first afternoon's fishing was four pike, the largest weighing $5\frac{3}{4}$ lbs., a big fish for these ponds. This was as many as I had caught during a whole month in previous years.

Of the twenty pike stomachs examined, sixteen were empty, two contained perch, and two sunfish. On one occasion when no perch was to be had I used a live sunfish for bait and caught a pike with it. That the pike were feeding to such an extent

on sunfish is the best evidence that their favorite food, the perch, were scarce. The perch caught ranged mostly from eight to ten inches in length, and I saw very few small ones.

I have been unable to form a satisfactory theory to account for this apparent very great increase in the number of pike and the scarcity of perch. There are no pike in Ampersand Brook, and Stony Creek, the only other means of entrance or exit is shallow, freezing solid in winter. During the period of high water in the spring it would be possible for fish to come through it from Raquette River. During the summer and fall beaver dams, of which there are always several, make it very difficult if not impossible for any fish to pass through this creek.

It may be suggested that there are no more pike in the ponds than in former years—that the greatly increased number caught is owing to the scarcity of their natural food, the perch. As far as I could discover, there had been no epidemic disease among the perch, and no changes in their grounds. Can the pike have eaten or driven them out of the ponds? If there are no more pike than in former years, this could not well be the case. Perhaps the unusually severe winter of 1917-1918 has something to do with it.

C. W. MEAD,
New York, N. Y.

XANTHICHTHYS MENTO FROM SANTA CATALINA.

Mr. Ernest Windle of Avalon, Santa Catalina Islands, reports that a specimen of "*Xanthichthys mento*" has just been taken near Avalon by Mr. F. J. Cole of Los Angeles. The specimen has been mounted and presented to the Tuna Club of Avalon.

This species was first described from the Revillagigedo Islands, West of Mexico. It has also